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URDU LITERATURE IN CANADA

A PRELIMINARY SURVEY

BY

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FOREWORD

The reports in this series, commissioned by the Multicultural Sector of the Department of the Secretary of State, were completed between 1979 and 1986. The content may therefore not always reflect entirely accurately the current situation, but, as pointed out in one of the reports, the situation of the ethnic writer per se has not changed appreciably in the last few years. Only the volume of publication has increased.

My task as editor was not to "normalize" the style of the individual contributors, but to ensure first of all a reasonable degree of conformity in the kind of material provided and in the layout of this material. Beyond this, and more importantly, I was concerned with the bibliographical information, which was intended to be as full and accurate as possible. It is in this area that the greatest difficulties lie in the field of ethnic literature.

A considerable proportion of the literature published by Canadian ethnic writers appears in journals with a very limited circulation or with a very short lifespan. Such periodicals may disappear even before they have been considered for acquisition by libraries, or they may go through a series of sea-changes re-appearing here or there under a different editor and a different name. Monographic works, on the other hand, are frequently published by small presses that apparently either do not know or ignore the requirement that they deposit copies of every publication with the National Library.

Most of the works listed in these reports are therefore not to be found in the National Library, no matter whether they have appeared in Canada or, as in so many cases, abroad. And since it is by no means easy to track down the works of any given individual, unless he or she is published by a mainstream publishing house or manages somehow to rank as an established figure - if only bibliographically - much of the bibliographical information is based on secondhand sources and is at times incomplete.

The problems are compounded by the difficulties in transliterating foreign symbols and by the less rigid conventions that apply in other cultures. While there are accepted systems of transliteration in the library world, the authors of these reports have not used them, and I have not felt it essential to apply them. By the same token, many of the writers cited, particularly those from the Indian sub-continent use more then one name, depending on circumstances and personal preference. Again, no attempt has been made to produce name forms that might find official acceptance in library circles.

Given the almost total absence of bibliographical, biographical, and critical sources in this field, these reports can only be viewed as first attempts at surveying the field. The same may be said of the bibliographical information, except that in most cases more writers and works are listed than are discussed in the text and an attempt has been made to incorporate bibliographical information through 1986. I sincerely hope that these reports will encourage readers and researchers in an area of Canadian literature which is full of vitality and promise.

Michael S. Batts

INTRODUCTION

In this study the aim has been to present a general picture of the current status of Urdu language and literature in Canada, to assess its contribution to the Canadian literary tradition, and to analyse briefly the outlook for the future. More particularly an attempt has been made to provide as accurate as possible a bibliographical record of Urdu writers and poets and to make a critical evaluation of their works. This was not an easy task, as no preliminary studies existed.

Initially, all relevant ethnic societies and organisations were asked to help in locating Urdu writers in Canada. Since only ten or twelve of these thirty organisations were able to provide any help at all, it was decided that progress could only be made through personal contacts. Many letters were written and telephone calls made to a variety of individuals across Canada, and the project was publicised in some ethnic newspapers. Progress was slow, but substantial. As writers were located, letters, questionnaires, and frequently also reminders were sent and/or were followed up by telephone calls. Although more than a dozen writers were interviewed, extensive interviews were conducted with only eight writers in Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal. The main objective of these personal interviews was to arrive at general conclusions with respect to the present status and future trends of Urdu language and literature in Canada.

The study which has resulted from this survey is divided into four chapters. The first provides an historical background on the Urdu language and its literature and sets the stage for the discussion in the subsequent chapters. The second chapter discusses the status of Urdu language and literature in Canada and is based on the results of the survey as well as on personal observations and experience. In the third chapter, short critiques and bibliographical accounts of Canadian Urdu writers are provided in alphabetical order, those writers that use a pen name rather than their legal name appearing under

their pen name. The fourth chapter presents some conclusions and lists the general source material presently available.

The transliteration of Urdu phrases and titles in this report does not follow any particular system. A "free" transliteration system has been used which attempts to record the Urdu sounds as closely as possible by using the standard English alphabet.

A number of individuals were most helpful in providing useful advice, and also in locating Urdu writers in Canada. I am indebted to all of them but particularly to Mr. W. A. Shaheen and Mr. M. H. K. Qureshi.

Last, but not least, I wish to thank the Multiculturalism Directorate of the Secretary of State, Canada for providing me with the opportunity to carry out this work. I hope that what follows will be instrumental in providing a better understanding of the Urdu language and literature in Canada, and will contribute to the formulation of policies with respect to Urdu language and literature in this country.

CHAPTER ONE

The Development of the Urdu Language and its Literature

Urdu is one of the major languages of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent and the literature written in this language, especially poetry, is among the finest in the world. Since Urdu language and literature are relatively unknown in Canada, some historical background is needed to set the stage for the discussion that follows.

The development of Urdu language and literature is directly related to the influence of Islam in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. Although the Muslim influence on the sub-continent began in the eighth century with the conquest of Sind (now a southern province of Pakistan) by the Arabs, it was only in the eleventh and twelfth centuries that the Muslim literary and cultural traditions began to take root in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. This cultural impact was essentially the result of the Muslim invasions from the north.

The Urdu language represents a synthesis of the medieval languages of Northern India (e.g., Bhasha, Khari Boli) and the Turko-Iranian languages of the Middle East, especially Persian which was brought to the sub-continent by the Muslims of Central Asian, Persian, and Afghan origin. It is believed that Urdu as a written language existed in the north as early as the twelfth century. However, spoken Urdu developed only gradually as an idiom of the "military camp" or Ordu, after which the language was later called.

While Urdu was evolving in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent, Persian remained the language of the court and of higher learning as late as the early nineteenth century. In form and content, therefore, Urdu language and literature remained closely associated with the Persian heritage of the Muslims of India. Although Urdu vocabulary has been derived from a variety of Indo-European languages as well as from Arabic, the Persian element has always remained dominant. So much so, that it would be safe to say that the entire body of traditional Urdu poetics (prosody, poetic forms, concepts relating to poetic diction and subject) has been almost entirely Persian. The Urdu language is

written in the graceful persianized form of Arabic script, nasta'liq, and syntactically it is based on a combination of Persian and Prakrit grammatical structures.

From its beginnings in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries until the latter half of the nineteenth century, Urdu literature remained a part of the larger Persian-Indic tradition. Only in the last decades of the nineteenth century did Urdu begin to assimilate Western forms and concepts, largely through the growing influence of the English language on the sub-continent.

Persian remained the literary language of the sub-continent for several centuries following the earlier Muslim invasions from the north. Indeed, during the earlier Mughal period (sixteenth to eighteenth centuries), India became a more important centre than Iran itself for the cultivation of Persian poetry. Under the Mughal patronage there flourished a large number of distinguished poets who wrote some of the finest poetry in the Persian language. Among them Faizi (d. 1595) and Bedil (d. 1721) were the greatest poets of India who used Persian as a natural means of expression. Subsequently, although significant Persian poetry continued to be written in India until the time of Iqbal (d. 1938), Urdu became the primary medium of literary expression.

It would seem rather paradoxical that, although the Urdu language evolved and existed in the northern part of the sub-continent, Urdu literature itself began to develop in the courts of Qutb Shahi and Adil Shahi, Kings of Golcanda and Bijapur in the South or the Deccan. The earlier development of Urdu literature in the south is largely attributed to the invasions of the Deccan by the Muslim rulers of Northern India and the resulting shift of the northern intellectual population to the south. In the south, the migrating intellectuals found the creative environment more congenial as a result of the relatively prolonged periods of peace. Urdu of the south, often called Deccani, had, however, weaker Persian influence and was dominated by the South Indian languages, such as Gujrati and Telgu, and also by Arabic which was very much in vogue in the south through the earlier Muslim influences from Arabia. Many well known seventeenth and eighteenth-century classical Urdu poets such as Wali, Siraj, and Hatim used the Deccani form of Urdu as a medium of literary expression, and in the later part of the seventeenth century, Aurangabad

became the centre of Urdu literary activity.

Although there was a considerable movement of intellectuals between highly persianised Delhi and the Deccani Aurangabad, it was the genius and conscious effort of Wali in the eighteenth century, that was instrumental in bridging the linguistic gap between the north and the south. It was Wali who persuaded and finally succeeded in convincing the literati of Delhi to take writing in Urdu seriously. Indeed, it was only in the latter part of the eighteenth century that Urdu literature in the north reached its apogee with poets such as Sauda, Dard, and Mir. With the migration of Urdu poets to the Court of Oudh in the eighteenth century, Lucknow in the north also became an important centre of Urdu literary activity. Delhi, however, never lost its prominence, and it witnessed the emergence of the greatest classical Urdu poets such as Ghalib, Zauq, and Shefta in the nineteenth century.

Urdu Poetry

As pointed out earlier, classical Urdu poetry is largely based on the Persian tradition. There is one poet, however, who cannot be described as a practitioner of the Persian tradition adopted by his contemporaries. Nazir Akbarabadi, who wrote in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, was a poet of the people who chose to write in the language of popular speech, and his themes show similar eclecticism. He wrote poems on such diverse topics as popular festivals, the seasons, the vanities of life, and erotic pleasures and pursuits. Nazir was generally ignored in his time by elitist poets and writers of tazkira (biographical and bibliographical accounts of writers and poets). Later, however, his genius was recognised and he is now considered a master of telling detail that immediately brings any event to life.

In traditional Urdu poetry there are six genres that are of major importance. These are the following:

Qasida or "ode" is a long poem in which each couplet has the same end-rhyme, and which has as its content either panegyric or satire. A number of eighteenth and nineteenth century Urdu poets such as Sauda, Insha, Zauq, and Ghalib are regarded highly for their achievements in this genre.

Masnavi is a poem of indeterminate length in rhyming couplets on any theme. The topics vary in range from mundane events of life, hunting trips of kings, and vagaries of nature's seasons to autobiographical sketches. Famous masnavis in Urdu were written by the later poets of Delhi and Lucknow, such as Mir, Mir Hasan, and Mirza Shauq.

Marsiya is a long poem in three couplet stanzas dealing with some aspect of the battle of Karbala (Iraq), that involved the family of the grandsons of the Prophet Muhammad. These poems were intended for recitation during the Shia celebration of Muharram. Marsiya is one genre which does not have an exact formal analogue in classical Persian. The two greatest masters of this genre were the nineteenth-century Mir Anis and Mirza Dabir. These two established musaddas or a six-line stanza.

Ghazal is a short lyric with prosodic requirements of both metre and rhyme. In ghazal, the two halves of the first couplet and the second line of the remaining couplets rhyme. A couplet in ghazal must be a complete semantic entity and must fully express a whole, well integrated poetic experience. The favourite themes of ghazal are erotic love, Sufi love, and metaphysics. Ghazal has been the most popular genre of Urdu poetry from its beginning to modern times. Indeed, the history of Urdu poetry is, for the most part, the story of the Urdu ghazal. The greatest names in Urdu ghazal are Mir Taqi Mir in the eighteenth century and Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib in the nineteenth century. Ghalib was a radical; he betrayed a sceptic's mind and left nothing unquestioned. He bridged the gap between the medieval and modern sensibility. Mir was a poet of love and pathos and had an authentic passion.

Qita was formally similar to ghazal, but it consists of an account of a single theme. Qitas are essentially ghazals without the rhyme in the first hemistich.

Rubai, or quatrain, was made familiar in English by Fitzgerald's translation of Omar Khayyam. A rubai could be written on any theme.

The majority of these genres of poetry are still in vogue, but ghazal is by far the most popular, the twentieth century producing such ghazal writers as Josh Maliyahabadi and Firaq Gorakhpuri. Besides ghazal, the most popular genre of modern Urdu poetry is nazm, which is similar to English poems and is also written in blank verse, known in Urdu as Azaad nazm.

The greatest Urdu poet of the twentieth century has undoubtedly been Muhammad Iqbal, whose didactic poetry, imagery, and power of expression changed the course of history in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. His philosophy of Khudi or "self" has a special place in post-Kantian voluntarism. Iqbal's position in the history of Muslim thought is unique, for he reconstructed Islamic philosophy on an existential basis but without ignoring the demands of intuitive experience. Iqbal's poetic works have been translated into most of the important languages of Europe and Asia.

Among contemporary poets, Faiz Ahmad Faiz is undoubtedly the most popular in Pakistan and India. This Pakistani poet received the Lenin Peace Prize in the 1960s and has greatly influenced the younger generation of poets such as Ashfaq Hussain, who recently immigrated to Canada. N. M. Rashid established the tradition of free verse in Urdu which has been followed by outstanding poets of the post-partition era, such as Majeed Amjad. The poetry of Farooq Hasan and Ashfaq Hussain of Canada is a continuation of the tradition established by N. M. Rashid and those who followed him.

Urdu Prose

The first three centuries in the development of Urdu literature were dominated by poetry. Urdu prose had a parallel evolution but at a slower pace than the poetry. The dastans, romantic or heroic tales, were never lacking in Urdu, and the tazkiras, or bio-bibliographical accounts of poets and writers, should be considered a significant genre in traditional Urdu literature. Dastan continued to be in vogue until the nineteenth century. The Fort William's College in Calcutta, which was actually the official translation bureau of the British Colonial rule, and the Delhi College produced a number of Urdu versions of Persian Dastans.

The novel and drama in Urdu were introduced much later, and the first

representative of the "modern" novel may safely be said to be Nazir Ahmad's Ibnul Waqt (The Son of the Moment). Ahmad's novels were essentially didactic and depicted the conflicts of the Muslim middle class in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. Later, Ratan-Nath Sarshar and Abdul Halim Sharar wrote many popular novels, but it was only in 1899 that a truly classic novel, Umrao Jan Ada, was written in Urdu by Mirza Ruswa. This novel boldly depicted the plight of an educated courtesan and the society around her. Prem Chand (1880-1930) carried the tradition into the twentieth century and also wrote excellent short stories. With Prem Chand the tradition of the novel and the short story in Urdu literature was firmly established. The contemporary period has produced excellent novelists, short story writers, and playwrights.

Among the novelists, undoubtedly the greatest have been Aziz Ahmad (see below) and Quratulain Haider. Quratulain Haider's novel, Aag Ka Dariya (River of Fire), published in the early 1950s, became a classic within a few years of its publication. It is not only Haider's magnum opus, but also a great contribution to Urdu and to world literature. Aag Ka Dariya is the creation of a modern mind that has a complete grasp of the demands of modern society and at the same time a profound familiarity with man's past. Time is the central theme of this novel and Haider has treated the 2,500 years of man's history - his achievements and failures - brilliantly. Aziz Ahmad also introduced new techniques into the Urdu novel with the publication of his novel Gurez, followed by Aag. In 1972 UNESCO published an English translation of his Aisi Bulandi Aisi Pasti (The Shore and the Wave). The Urdu novel continued its progress, and Abdullah Husain's novel, Udas Naslin (The Sad Generations), published in 1963, also made a valuable contribution to Urdu literature.

Progress in the Urdu short story has been equally significant since the partition of the Indian sub-continent. Among many excellent short story writers of the post-Prem Chand era are Saadat Hasan Munto, Ismat Chughtai, Ibrahim Jalees, Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi, and Krishn Chander. The works of these writers are full of vitality and deal generally with psycho-social themes relating to the struggle against the British and to the human tragedy of the 1947 partition of the sub-continent and its aftermath. Some of these stories are undoubtedly masterpieces of world literature and are available in translations in English and other languages.

Urdu drama began with the production of Indarsabha (Indra's Court) by Nawab Wajid Ali Shah in 1855. The drama was a musical in two acts and was written by Agha Musawi "Amanat." Urdu drama was later developed by Parsi theatrical companies, and its main aim was to entertain the spectators. The first real dramatist in Urdu was Agha Hashr Kashmiri (1879-1931), who founded the Shakespeare Theatrical Company in India. Initially Hashr wrote traditional rhyming dramas but later switched to prose. Both his entertaining plays, such as Yehudi Ki Beti (The Jew's Daughter), and nationalistic plays, such as Hindustan, enjoyed great popularity throughout the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. Thus, Hashr may safely be called the father of Urdu drama. There have been many playwrights since Hashr, but the stage has never been popular among the masses in Pakistan. In India, however, it continues to be popular, particularly among the more intellectual class. Among contemporary playwrights Imtiaz Ali Taj is a prominent name, whose Anarkali (1942) was extremely popular on stage and more recently on television. Writers like Mirza Adeeb and Intezar Hussain have written excellent plays for the radio and television. The television drama has been very successful in Pakistan, but modern stage plays are popular only in larger cities like Karachi and Lahore.

The tradition of Urdu literary criticism dates back to the early tazkira writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Although these tazkiras have a place in the history of Urdu criticism, modern techniques of literary criticism did not appear in Urdu literature until Altaf Husain Hali and Shibli Naumani in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Twentieth-century Urdu criticism now parallels modern European traditions, concepts, and techniques. Among the important contemporary critics are Al-e-Ahmad Saroor, Ehtesham Hussain, and Ebadat Brelvi, who have not only consolidated the tradition of Urdu criticism, but have introduced scientific techniques that have eliminated much of the emotionalism that had persisted before Hali.

A significant phase of twentieth-century Urdu literature started with the Progressive Writer's Movement in the 1930s. Writers of this movement, such as Sajjad Zaheer, Ismat Chughtai, and Ali Sardar Jaffri, attempted to make literature an arm of the social revolution. Although the movement did not survive for long, it did initiate a process of progressivism among the younger generation of Urdu writers. Following the partition of the sub-continent in 1947,

there was a significant change in the mood of the Urdu writers, both in Pakistan and in India. This change in mood was the result of the traumatic experiences of the partition and the human suffering it brought with it. For many years after 1947 Urdu writers and poets wrote and lamented about the hate that was engendered between Muslims and Hindus by the partition of the sub-continent, and the suffering it brought to them. That was a period of confusion and turmoil, but, ironically, some of the finest literature in Urdu was produced at this time.

The younger generation of Urdu writers in Pakistan and India is faced with more difficult challenges and more complex problems and is witnessing a time of socio-political decadence. This is a period of contemplation for the Urdu writers, and it is bound to produce a literature which could be cherished by generations to come. In the last few decades a number of Urdu writers of Pakistan and India have emigrated to Western countries such as Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. This flow of Urdu-speaking immigrants into Canada and other Western countries may lead to the emergence of a new phase in the history of Urdu literature.

CHAPTER TWO

Urdu Language and Literature in Canada

The history of Urdu-speaking immigrants in Canada is less than thirty years old and the immigration records suggest that the initial rate of immigration from India and Pakistan, where the majority of the Urdu-speaking population lives, was not significant. For example, in the 1950s, the number of professionals entering Canada each year from Pakistan varied from 27 to 163 according to the Canada Department of Manpower and Immigration, "Immigration Statistics." The total number of professional immigrants from India and Pakistan in 1974 was 10,582 and 2902 respectively. These statistics and information from local sources in Toronto suggest that the Urdu-speaking immigrant population in Canada is now significant, especially in large urban centres, such as Toronto-Hamilton and Calgary-Edmonton.

Although the Urdu-speaking population of Canada has come from both Pakistan and India, the large majority of the Urdu-speaking immigrants who have a knowledge of both written and spoken Urdu are of Pakistani origin. Some immigrants of South Asian origin who have immigrated to Canada from East African countries and the West Indies also speak Urdu.

Most of the Urdu-speaking immigrants of Canada live in major urban areas, such as Toronto-Hamilton, Calgary-Edmonton, Ottawa-Montreal, and Vancouver. Relatively few Urdu-speaking immigrants live in the maritimes, Newfoundland, Manitoba, or Saskatchewan. They generally belong to the intellectual class and have training in science, engineering, education, management, and similar professional fields. In recent years, however, there has also been a flow of working-class Urdu-speaking immigrants to this country.

The Urdu-speaking immigrants to Canada are one of the so-called "visible minorities" and are culturally different from the predominant Anglo-Celtic and European majority of Canada. Thus, the integration of Urdu-speaking immigrants

into Canadian society is a slow process, and they feel more culturally isolated than the European and American immigrants. This initial cultural isolation in an alien society has generated an intense cultural, literary, and religious activity among Urdu-speaking immigrants, especially in larger urban centres such as Toronto. Many who were marginally interested in literature before emigrating to Canada are now actively involved in literary activities. This, of course, reflects the universal immigrant problems of a search for identity and the need to cope with the nostalgia generated by love for the land of origin. For this reason Urdu-speaking immigrants in Canada are making a conscious effort to preserve their language and culture. In Toronto, Ottawa, Vancouver, and presumably in other areas, Urdu schools for children are operating primarily through the sincere efforts of volunteers. Generally, these schools are associated with local mosques and Muslim Associations; in some cases they are encouraged by the local school boards.

Despite these activities, the survival of the Urdu language in Canada is highly questionable. While the efforts to teach Urdu to children may have been successful in some instances, the organizers of these programmes appear to have a variety of problems, including financial difficulties. Although it may be too early to predict the result of these efforts, the results of our survey indicate that almost 90% of the individuals interviewed believed that the future for the Urdu language in Canada was from fair to good and only 10% thought that the language might not survive in the second generation. My own view, based on a psycho-social analysis of the Pakistani immigrants in Canada, leads me to agree with the 10%. As indicated earlier, the majority of Urdu-speaking immigrants belongs to the professional class. As a result, they are relatively affluent and live in the suburbs as part of the English or French-speaking communities. The children therefore attend either English or French schools and associate almost exclusively with the children of their community. Thus, the influence of the language "in vogue" is predominant. Most of the teen-age children of Urdu-speaking immigrants I have known speak only English. Those who have been to French schools can speak both English and French. Very few of these children can express themselves in Urdu, and almost none can read or write Urdu or have any knowledge of Urdu literature.

This is generally the status of the Urdu language among the second-generation immigrants. Unless some drastic measures are taken by the Urdu-speaking community and by local school boards to improve the situation, the future of the Urdu language in the second generation appears to be rather bleak. If the trend observed so far prevails, the only hope for the survival of the Urdu language in this country would be a continuous flow of Urdu-speaking immigrants into Canada. Another factor which can contribute to the preservation of Urdu language in Canada is the possible development of the so-called "ghetto mentality," something which could result from highly localised populations of Urdu-speaking immigrants in industrialised urban areas such as Toronto. However, this is unlikely to happen, since this phenomenon is almost exclusively associated with working-class immigrants which are not typical of Urdu-speaking immigrants to Canada.

Literary activity among the first generation of Urdu-speaking immigrants is prominent mainly because they belong to a highly educated intellectual class. The major centre of Urdu literary activity is the Toronto-Hamilton area, and to a lesser extent areas such as Ottawa-Montreal and Calgary-Edmonton. Urdu literary interests in Canada are kept alive by the efforts in these urban areas of a handful of individuals who regularly organize mushairas (assemblies of poets) and symposia. There are many Urdu literary societies in Toronto, Ottawa, Edmonton, and Vancouver. Some of these societies meet regularly to encourage local talent in discussion groups. Mushairas held in private homes also generate considerable literary interest. Recently, the visits by prominent Urdu writers of Pakistan and India, such as Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Kalim Ajiz, Ali Sardar Jaffri, and Kaifi Azmi have also been inspiring.

The publication of Urdu newspapers such as Imroz, Paighambar, Al Hilal, Pakeeza, and Gulrang, all from Toronto, also keeps the interest in Urdu language and literature alive. Most of these newspapers have literary columns, but their literary standards are generally rather low for the more discriminating reader. Some improvement may be expected with the publication since 1986 of Urdu Canada.

Anthologies of Canadian Urdu literature are conspicuously lacking. Recently, however, an anthology of North-American Urdu poets has been published in Canada, and this includes a few Canadian Urdu poets. The publication

of further anthologies of Canadian Urdu literature would generate considerable interest and enthusiasm among the Urdu writers of Canada and the Urdu-speaking community at large.

The literary standards of Urdu writers in Canada vary considerably. While a majority of them would not be considered as writers or poets of any stature in Pakistan and India, there are some who are undoubtedly first rate and have already gained recognition there. With the exception of a few prose writers, the majority of Urdu writers in Canada are poets. This is not surprising, since traditionally there has been more emphasis on poetry than prose in Urdu literature. One of the basic problems for Canadian Urdu writers is the absence of library facilties and of access to current literature. The serious writers nevertheless make efforts to obtain journals and books through their contacts in India and Pakistan.

The writers who were interviewed at length had surprisingly similar feelings about the influence of the Canadian milieu on their creative activity. As expected, they expressed intense feelings of isolation and alienation in Canada, something which is quite prominent in the works of some poets. Poets such as Shaheen, Farooq Hassan, and Irfana Aziz have dealt with such themes as the harshness and beauty of the Canadian environment and cultural, psychosocial, and economic survival.

Despite the literary consciousness among Urdu-speaking immigrants in Canada, there appears to be a general lack of direction among them. Almost all the individuals interviewed and those who responded to the questionnaire agreed with this observation. They also believed that there is an urgent need to develop adequate means of communication among Urdu writers in Canada. The Urdu writers surveyed agreed unanimously that an annual congress of Canadian Urdu writers and the publication of a high-quality Urdu journal would be most effective in providing the desired direction and inspiration for the development of Urdu literature. Urdu writers in Canada also have little contact with the other ethnic writers of Canada and with the Canadian literary community at large. This situation should be improved. An effective means of establishing better communication would be the occasional publication of English and French translations of selected works of Urdu writers.

The Urdu literary base in Canada is of course still very narrow. It is too early to determine whether or not this literary activity in Canada will lead to the establishment of a so-called "Canadian Urdu literary tradition." For most writers the major source of inspiration still appears to be their strong cultural link with the country of origin. Nevertheless, many poets and writers in Urdu have received some influence from their Canadian environment, as reflected in their thematic appraoches, and have thus contributed to the Canadian literary tradition in general. For example, Aziz Ahmad's short story Mussalas (The Triangle) and Irfana Aziz's poem Louis Riel may be considered to represent the initial formative stage of Canadian Urdu literature. However, the fate of Urdu literature in Canada is directly related to the fate of the Urdu language in this country, and it is very hard to make any conclusive statements at this stage.

Among academic institutions in Canada there is little activity in the area of Urdu literature. This reflects the general indifference and ignorance of the culture of South Asian Muslims in North America. However, in recent years universities in the United States have shown considerable interest in this area. Some notable examples are: Harvard University, Oakland University (Michigan), University of Arizona (Tucson), University of Chicago, University of Wisconsin, and the University of California (Berkeley). All these Universities have scholars engaged in research on Urdu literature and South Asian Muslim culture.

In Canada the only institution that has some interest in Urdu is the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University. However, the research programmes at this Institute have dealt with the Urdu literature only in a marginal way. For example, the institute has produced theses dealing with Ghulam Jilani Barq, with Parvez, with Mawlana Azad, with the Khilafat Movement, with Shah Wali Ullah, and with Shah Abd al-Aziz. If one were to take a very broad perspective, perhaps much of this could be considered as having to do with Urdu. In most cases, however, the centre of interest is religion or certain historical considerations. It is to be hoped that wider interests will be encouraged by the anticipated establishment of a Chair of Urdu Studies at that institution. For the moment, however, a major and significant contribution of the Institute at McGill has been the publication of a set of language-

teaching materials and readers for Urdu. Ironically, these readers, produced at McGill, are now being used at several institutions in the United States. Since these readers are a major Canadian contribution to the promotion of Urdu in North America, references are provided in Chapter Four. In conclusion, it can only be said that there are considerable prospects for the development of Urdu language and literature in Canada, and that any such development can only have a significant positive impact on the development of Canadian literature as a whole.

CHAPTER THREE

Urdu Poets and Writers of Canada

This chapter provides brief accounts of Urdu writers of poetry, prose, and drama. The list is alphabetical by last name, and pen names are used rather than legal names. Information was not forthcoming from the following writers: Anwar Kaml, Abid Jaffery, Fayyaz Shah, Sohail Akhtar, Rahim Anjan, Ameer Saulat, Agha Safdaa Safdar, Waheeda Abid, Shameem Malik, and Mohammad Ali Raza.

Ahmad, Aziz

Aziz Ahmad emigrated to Canada at the invitation of the University of Toronto in 1962. He remained a Professor of Islamic Studies until his death from cancer in 1978. When Ahmad died at the age of 65, he left a treasure of literary and historical writings to Canada and the world. A detailed account of his literary achievements would require a book in itself. The following is only a very brief summary.

A scholar of international reputation, Aziz Ahmad started his literary career as a novelist while a student in the 1930s, by publishing two novels, Hawas (Greed) and Mar Mar aur Khoon (Marble and Blood). In the 1940s, he published another three novels which earned him tremendous popularity and recognition as a novelist. Indeed, these novels, Gurez, Aag, and Aisi Bulandi Aisi Pasti, began a new era of the Urdu novel in the sub-continent added new dimensions to novel writing in Urdu. His novel Aisi Bulandi Aisi Pasti achieved international recognition when UNESCO published an English translation (The Shore and the Wave) in 1971. In 1950, Aziz Ahmad published his last novel Shabnam, an excellent romance which unfortunately did not receive as much recognition as it deserved.

Aziz Ahmad has also published a number of short stories in a variety of Urdu journals in India and Pakistan. Some of his well known short stories, "Raqs-i-Natamam" (The Unfinished Dance), "Madan Sania," and "Sadian" (The Centuries) were published in a leading Urdu journal, Nagoosh (Lahore, Paki-

stan). Although these short stories have been recognised as some of the finest in Urdu fiction, his long stories or "novelets" were a more significant contribution. In Zareen Taj, Khazang Jastah, and Jab Ankhen Ahan-Posh Hooin, Aziz Ahmad depicted historical events and characters. The characters are so lively and the description of events so vivid that the effect of his writing is almost visual. Two of his long stories, "Teri Dilbari Ka Bharam" and "Mussallas", depicted his experiences in England and Canada respectively.

Ahmad has published two books of literary criticism: Taraqqi Pasand Adab (Progressive Literature) and Iqbal: Ek Naee Tashkeel (Iqbal: A New Approach). These books have an important place in Urdu literature of modern times. In English, Aziz Ahmad has published five books on Islamic history which are the fruit of his work at the University of Toronto and at the University of London before he emigrated to Canada: Studies in Islamic Culture and the Indian Environment; Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan, 1857-1964; Muslim Self-Statement in India and Pakistan, 1857-1968; An Intellectual History of Islam in India; History of Islamic Sicily.

Aziz Ahamad published numerous essays in English on a variety of literary and historical subjects. They are scattered in the well known journals of the world, including North American journals. Limitations of space preclude a longer listing.

During his early life, Ahmad published Urdu translations of European writers such as Ibsen and Dante. Occasionally he also wrote poetry in the ghazal genre. Many of these ghazals were written in Canada and are reflections of a mature, sensitive, and very human mind. In recognition of his achievements in literature and history he was awarded the honorary degree of D. Litt by the University of London (1973), and in Canada he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. In 1976, two years before his death, he was honoured by the Government of Italy for his book entitled The History of Islamic Sicily. He lived an intellectually satisfying life, and his name will be enshrined in the history of Urdu literature mainly for his contribution as a novelist.

Ashraf, Syed Moin

"Fatherhood" (short story). Urdu Canada 1 (1986), 53-60

Aziz, Irfana

Irfana Aziz is a poetess of high calibre. Although relatively young (born in 1940) among the contemporary poets of Urdu, she has all the qualities of a mature and highly sensitive poet. She has a deep understanding of the realities of life, and her love for humanity is reflected throughout her poems. Her poetry is, however, free from pointless emotionalism. Irfana Aziz is an optimist and has faith in humanity. Her inventive use of imagery reflects the breadth of her imagination. She uses highly persianised Urdu which often makes her poems difficult to understand but certainly adds tremendous music and charm to her compositions. She can be classified as a naturalist; many of her poems, including those composed in Canada, reflect a tendency toward pastoral poetry.

Berg Rez (Autumn Leaves or Fallen Leaves), privately published in Lahore in 1971, was Aziz's first collection of short and long poems. She has written ghazals also, but her main interest is nazm. At least two of her poems, "Karb-i-Afreenish" (Agony of Creation) and "Falak Perwaz" (Flight to Heavens), can be considered to be of the highest standard and worthy of translation. Both are short poems and are representative of the best of her poetry. A second collection appeared recently under the title Kaf-e-bahar [Spring's palm] (Karachi: Maktaba-e-Afkar, 1985?).

Irfana Aziz also wrote a musical play Jurm-i-Isyan which appeared in the Drama Number of Afkar (Karachi, 1968). It was successfully staged in Pakistan and has been translated into English. Although she has published a number of literary essays, she is basically a poetess.

During the eight or nine years Irfana Aziz has been in Canada, she has written many poems that reflect her original poetic qualities but also show the influence of the Canadian milieu. While her poem on the martyrdom of Louis Riel reflects her devotion to Canada, she is not any different from most of the other Canadian Urdu poets in experiencing isolation and the nostalgia that

it generates. This latter feeling is very intense in some of her poems.

Bazmi, Aijaz Ali

Bazmi writes ghazals and Qitas. His verses are romantic and follow traditional diction and imagery. They are not exactly thought-provoking, but appeal to the casual audience of Urdu poetry. Bazmi has a good command of Urdu. In Pakistan he was asociated with Dr. Abdul Haq who is known as the father of Urdu largely because of his dictionaries. Bazmi's verses remain unpublished with the exception of a few which have appeared in Toronto newspapers.

Brelvi,Ikram

Ikram Brelvi is a prolific writer. He has written countless critical essays, plays for radio, television, and stage, and three successful novels. He has been a literary critic for various English language newspapers and magazines. He started writing during his college days and was first published in the Urdu journal Rooman which was founded and edited by the well known Urdu poet, Akhtar Sheerani. Since then he has published his essays and other literary works in some of the most reputable literary journals of Pakistan and India, such as Adabi Dunya of Lahore and Saqi of Delhi.

Since 1942 Ikram Brelvi has written ceaselessly for "All India Radio," and after the partition of the sub-continent for "Radio Pakistan" (now Broadcasting Corporation of Pakistan). During this period he broadcast scores of literary and cultural talks and wrote more than two hundred plays for radio, television, and the stage. In these plays he successfully attempted to analyse a variety of themes, from the eradication of social evils to the love of the land and the will to live.

Ikram Brelvi is now acclaimed as a playwright of stature in Pakistan. So far he has published three books of his plays: Sherar-i-Sang (Sparks from Stones) - a selection of one-act plays, and Saudagar (The Merchant), and Zulf Kay Sar Honey Tak (Taming of the Vexations) - both full-length plays. Sherar-i-Sang deals with the trials and tributions of Pakistani artists in the humdrum circumstances of modern materialistic society; Saudagar deals with the

characterisation of a smuggler and portrays smuggling activity in Pakistan; and Zulf Kay Sar Honey Tak is the story of an aggressive woman who is very cleverly humbled by her husband.

Brelvi has published three novels which are also valued highly by his critics: Naya Ufaq (The New Horizon), Gardesh (Cataclysm), Lava (Volcanic Eruption). Naya Ufaq is a radical novel which bolsters the image of Man and invests him with the titles of "maker of history" and "legislator of the world"; Gardesh depicts the struggle of a female activist who tries to soar sky-high in society but gets into the labyrinth saying, "I fell upon the thorns of life, I bleed"; and Lava is a vivid documentary of the events of an historic era against the backdrop of the personality of a young restive soul in search of his identity which materialises in the establishment of Pakistan.

Ikram Brelvi's favourite themes are undoubtedly sociological, but he seems to be just as comfortable with cultural and political satire and uses symbolism as an effective weapon. He has been in Canada for only two years and during this time he has completed three full length plays: "Aakhri Perwaz" (Last Flight), "Barf Ki Deewar" (Wall of Ice), and "Khoon Unmol" (Peerless Blood). The first two of these plays are set in the Pakistani-Canadian locale and the last in the turbulent Russo-Afghan perspective. These plays have not yet been published.

Although Ikram Brelvi has served as a literary columnist for many English-language newspapers and magazines, he has decided to write in English seriously only since he arrived in Canada. Two forthcoming books have been written in English. The first, Evaluation and Epitaph: Gleanings from Urdu literature, has been sponsored by the University of California at Berkeley. As the title indicates, this book is a collection of essays in literary criticism. Brelvi has been highly selective and has concentrated largely on contemporary Urdu writers and their works. The second, The Great Albertans, is essentially a history of Alberta and has been sponsored by the Government of Alberta.

Chishti, M. Khaleel-ur-Rahman

Chishti is a poet influenced by religious scholars such as Abul Ala Maudoodi,

Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, and Shibli Naumani, and by poets such as Mohammad Iqbal and Josh Malyahabadi. He uses a variety of poetic forms, usually with artistic strokes that lend dimensions to his poetry. But his poetry is more of a message than a medium; his mission-oriented approach restricts the growth of a talent that could manifest itself in better creative ways. Nevertheless, his poems are readable and thought-provoking at times, and hence worth watching for.

Chishti has published his poems in the Urdu journals of the United States and India. He is now putting together his first collection of poems which he intends to publish in the near future.

An Agronomist by profession, Chishti runs an evening and weekend school to teach Islamic History, the Qura'an, and Urdu language to children of Urdu-speaking immigrants in Vancouver.

Farid, Khalid

Khalid is a popular poet among the Urdu-speaking public in Ottawa. He writes nazms, ghazals, and Qita's. His verses have not attained maturity and require considerable grooming. He remains unpublished.

Haider, Iftikhar

Haider is a gentle poet. He writes ghazals, Qita's, and religious poems. His non-religious verses reflect clean, clear, and simple feelings of his own, as he reacts to his environment. He has been influenced by traditional Urdu poets, such as Ghalib, and by religious and mystical poets, such as Iqbal and Gibran. As such, his verses appear to have traditional and religious influences. Haider's purely religious poetry appeals to the audience in poetical and religious gatherings.

Haider has published a few of his verses in the Toronto newspaper, Crescent. He has written about eighty poems so far, thirty nine of them ghazals.

Hasan, Abrar

Abrar Hasan writes both ghazals and nazms. His compositions are generally based on pre-conceived and meditated ideas. However, his ghazals reflect more spontaneity of thought than his nazms. In his nazms, Hasan uses subtle imagery and experiences from everyday life to emphasise and construct his central theme, which seems to be dominated by twentieth-century existentialism. Indeed, a great majority of his nazms represent an evolutionary process of his own understanding of the fundamental questions surrounding human existence. Since the themes for his nazms are often derived from his own experiences, his verses tend to lean towards a "statemental" mode of phraseology, reflecting his inner conflicts, anxieties, and dilemmas. Nevertheless, his verses do attain universality and dimension, because his themes are related to the much broader aspects of human life. Hasan's motivation to write nazms is undoubtedly to delineate his own interpretations of human existence and its uniqueness in the universe. In style, but not in content and diction, his nazms reflect the influence of modern Urdu poets such as N. M. Rashid. Yet his treatment of themes has an individuality which is best reflected in the nazms he has composed in the last two or three years.

Abrar Hasan's ghazals are thought-provoking and usually have the required qualities of this genre of Urdu lyrical poetry. Many of the themes in his ghazals have a marked similarity to those of his nazms and therefore aid in the construction of his central theme. With time his ghazals will surely further improve and reach maturity.

Hasan has also written short stories, selecting themes similar to those in his nazms. He has written about fifty stories, of which he has published a few in Afkar (Karachi) and Ahang (India).

Hasan's verses remain largely unpublished simply by choice. He now appears to be convinced that it is time to publish them. His first collection of poems, "Lamha Lamha", is ready for publication. I feel, however, that Hasan should do justice to his verses, both nazms and ghazals, and should also publish them in the open literature for wider exposure. Some of Hasan's poems have recently appeared in an anthology of North American poets, Baz Gasht, published by Crescent Pak, Toronto and edited by M. H. K. Qureshi. His poems

are also expected to appear in another anthology now being edited and published by Hussain Imam in Washington, D.C.

Hassan, Faruq

Faruq Hassan is an intelligent and sensitive poet. He has an analytical mind but consciously avoids philosophising about issues, events, and problems. He has always been looking for images and objects that may contain and express his feelings and ideas, and has avoided direct statements. Hassan does not write to a pre-arranged design or a pre-conceived idea; he is spontaneous in his perception of themes. He is highly critical of others' works and of his own. In an interview he claimed to have discarded more than half of what he has written since he started writing in the late 1950s and early 1960s. At a recent meeting of poets he said that he was fully satisfied with only half a dozen of his poems and felt that some of his published poems should not have been printed. However, a great majority of his poems composed in the 1960s and 1970s are excellent, full of vitality and a deep appreciation of human feelings. He is undoubtedly one of the most brilliant poets of Urdu in North America.

An examination of Hassan's poems published so far reveals that he has been moved by four or five basic themes. Much of his poetry is about himself, although he tries to create personae in whose voices the poems are narrated, e.g., "Naik Aurton Ka Chorus" (A Chorus of Pious Women) and "Puraney Motif Par Nazm" (Poem on an Old Motif). He consciously avoids "lyricising" his feelings, i.e., speaking in his own voice in his poems. In one of his poems, "Ai Darakhton Ke Bananey Waley" (O the Creator of Trees), which is a prayer or an invocation, he refers to himself in the last stanza in the third person. In the pre-1967 poems the dominant theme appears to be the loss of a peaceful, semi-pastoral way of life. Since he always lived in cities, it is his longing for urban life and his feeling of being trapped in and condemned to live in cities that he has transformed into a nostalgia for a lost existence. For instance in "Chohoti Larki Ki Doa" (The Little Girl's Prayer) and "Bey Naam" (Without a Name) he captures this emotion very well. In "Sarguzasht" and "Sada Ka Jadoo" he has beautifully captured the intensity of feelings associated

with the loss of cherished things and moments in the process of growing up and aging. Fear of dying comes out in his early as well as recent poems. In the four stanzas of his poem, "Ai Mere Jism Ke Makeen," published last year in Mah-e-Nau, a leading Urdu journal in Pakistan, he has analysed this very fundamental phenomenon very successfully. Themes such as God as an enigma for man and His relationship with mankind have also been treated by Faruq Hassan in some of his poems such as "Justajoo" (The Struggle) and "Chalo Us Ko Dhoonden" (Let's Go in Search of Him). Recently Hassan has also written some dramatic pieces which express other people's dilemmas in their own voices, for instance, marriage as an institution that entraps man in that it engenders in him a sense of being a failure, of having made wrong compromises.

Faruq Hassan belongs to a relatively new generation of Urdu poets - a generation that grew up in independent Pakistan and experienced the traumas of social and political injustices. He is an individual who recognised the prevailing political decadence in his native Pakistan, and moved to Canada to find the peace of mind he would have liked to have in his own homeland. He is a poet who is faced with the problems and challenges of living in an alien society, which are bound to induce new dimensions in his creative ability.

Hassan has published his poems in almost all the major Urdu journals of Pakistan. The following list of his published poems is more or less complete.

"Arz-i-Hunar" in Naee Nazmain, ed. Sayyed Sajjad. Naee Matbooat, Lahore, 1967; also published in 1966 Ki Behtreen Nazmain, ed. Muneer Niazi, Al Bayan, Lahore, 1966.

"Ai Bure Shahar," Savera, 42.

"Mere Taa'meer Main," Savera, 53/54 (1977)

"Mera Naam Hamid," Savera, 40.

"Silsila-i-Shauq," Adab-i-Lateef, 63:2-3 (1963).

"Sach Ka Zaher," Funoon, 10:6 (1970).

"Jeeney Ka Qureena," Auraq, (1969). Annual Number.

"Naya Saal," Adab-i-Lateef, (1963). Annual Number.

"Aaitraaf," Funoon, 11:5-6 (1970).

"Ehsas Ke Teen Manzar," Adabi Digest, (1967).

"Zindagi Jeeney Ki Koshish Main" and "Aai Mere Jism Ke Makin," Mah-i-Nau, (April 1979).

Besides these poems, Faruq Hassan has published a collection of sixteen long and short poems with Jeelani Kamran (a well known poet of Pakistan) in the book entitled Chhoti Bari Nazmen. This book was published by Kitabiyat of Lahore and was intended to provide new directions in Pakistani poems by emphasising the complexity of Pakistani society, and a need for literary nationalism.

Faruq Hassan has introduced Urdu fiction to Western readers by translating a number of Urdu short stories into English. He has made translations of four well known Pakistani short story writers in a book entitled "Nothing But the Truth" which he edited and published himself from Dawson College, Montreal in 1978. The book contains many other translations by other individuals. His English translations of three other short stories: "Neend Ka Bachpan" (A Childhood of Sleep) by Quraatulain Haider, "Sarak Ke Kinare" (The First Fall), and "Darpok" (Coward) by Saadat Hasan Manto are to appear in the Journal of South Asian Literature (University of Chicago). Hassan has also translated a number of poems by N.M. Rashid (a well known progressive poet of Pakistan) which are also scheduled to appear in the Journal of South Asian Literature.

In 1966-67, before emigrating to Canada, Faruq Hassan worked on the translation team of the publishing firm, Nigarishat (Lahore), and supervised and edited Intezar Hussain's translation into Urdu of Stuart R. Schram's biography of Mao Tse Tung. He also published an Urdu translation of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's long short story, "No one writes to the Colonel." This translation appeared as "Chasm-i-Barah" in Muasir, vol. 1, no. 1 (1979).

Hina, Tazeen

Tazeen Hina is among the prominent Urdu poets of Toronto. Her literary career began in her early teens when the dailies Kohistan and Jung of Pakistan provided her with exposure to a very wide audience. While still at college, Tazeen Hina's poems began appearing in well known Urdu journals such as Funoon, Nairang-e-Khayal, and Adab-e-Lateef. With her marriage in 1969 and subsequent emigration to Canada, there occurred a temporary break in her literary pursuits. However, with the appearance of literary activity in Toronto, Tazeen Hina has once again started writing and has carved a distinctive place for

herself among the well known Urdu poets of North America.

Hina has experimented with both ghazal and nazm genres and has largely dealt with traditional romantic themes. Her ghazals exhibit considerable spontaneity and a certain freshness of approach. This effect is heightened by evidence of great depth of feeling in her creations which are expressed with clarity and simplicity of image. In her nazms, too, Tazeen Hina deals with traditional themes. Often these also deal with the restrictive influence of traditional Pakistani culture on the role of women. Although Tazeen Hina is is primarily concerned with poetic creations, she has occasionally written some short stories as well. She has published her poetry and prose in Pakistani journals as well as in some newspapers of Toronto. Some of her poems have appeared in an anthology of North American Urdu poets, Baz Gasht, published by Crescent Publications in Toronto.

Hussain, Ashfaq

Ashfaq Hussain belongs to that generation of young Urdu poets who have hope for the future of mankind. He was born in independent Pakistan in 1951 and has witnessed the struggle of classes, the political chaos, and the agonising death of democracy in Pakistan. Yet Ashfaq writes: "If this is a new Dawn / I salute this new Dawn." This indeed is the voice of a majority of young poets of Pakistan, and it does not reflect defeat, fear, indifference, or a lack of hope. It reflects a new optimism and a commitment of the new generation - a commitment to face the harsh realities of life. It is this commitment that is reflected in Ashfaq Hussain's poems. Every word, thought, and image in Hussain's poetry is a reminder that he is a poet of his own age. He is perceptive, analytical, and imaginative. He avoids direct statements; his poems are realistic, yet they are not devoid of music. Ashfaq Hussain's poems (ghazals and nazms) were published in 1979 by the Pakistan Council of Arts and Culture, Karachi in a book entitled Etbar, which has received extremely favourable criticism from the most distinguished critics in Pakistan and India. Recently a collection of his poetry appeared in English translation (Toronto: U.I. Publishers).

Hussain has also taken literary criticism seriously. In 1977 he published a book on the well known poet of Pakistan and the Lenin Peace Prize winner, Faiz Ahmad Faiz. This book is entitled Faiz: Ek Jaiza and is an excellent criticism of the poet who has influenced him most (published by Idara-i-Yadgar-i-Ghalib, Karachi). His forthcoming book is "Iqbal aur Germany" (Iqbal and Germany). This book is an exhaustive and critical account of Muhammad Iqbal's academic and intellectual experiences in Germany and how they influenced his philosophy of Khudi or "self." Ashfaq's poems and essays have been published in a variety of Urdu journals in Pakistan.

Ashfaq Hussain emigrated to Canada in 1979 after working with the Pakistan Council of Arts and Culture in Karachi. He is a promising young artist who deserves attention. His reasons for coming to Canada are not any different from those of many other Pakistani intellectuals who have made Canada their home.

(Ibrat), i.e. Khan, Mohammad Ali

Ibrat writes religious poems, Na'ats and ghazals. Born in 1921, he belongs to a generation that considered poetry a good pastime. As such his verses follow the well worn romantic path and offer nothing but rhyme. He often publishes in Toronto newspapers.

Imam, Afzal

Afzal Imam writes ghazals which have a popular appeal. He deals with romantic themes and often voices his dissatisfaction with the human condition. His verses lack depth of thought but show strong human feelings. Some of his ghazals have appeared in Baz Gasht. His ghazals have also appeared in Toronto newspapers and possibly in India.

Josh, i.e, Khan, Mohammad Abdullah

Josh writes ghazals in traditional Urdu diction and deals with romantic themes. Although his verses are limited in scope, he has the ability on occa-

sion to stimulate his audience. He publishes his verses in the Toronto Urdu newspapers.

Naqvi, Shahid

Shahid Naqvi is a humorous poet. His humour at times takes the form of satire but more often comes close the absurd. He has written many nazms and ghazals which have been published in the various issues of the Toronto Urdu newspaper, Paighambar, and they have amused the Urdu-speaking public of Toronto. Naqvi is now in his seventies or eighties.

Qureshi, M.H.K.

Qureshi is a literary critic and a scholar in Islamic Studies; he also writes nazms and ghazals. He is devoted to the cause of promoting Urdu language and literature in Canada, working tirelessly for this cause and certainly deserving of admiration. He has been writing since the early 1950s and has published over thirty essays on various aspects of Urdu poetry and Urdu poets in the Urdu journals and newspapers of India, Canada, and the United States. These essays include criticisms of poets and writers such as Ghalib, Iqbal, Sahir, Wajida Tabassum, Jan Nisar Akhtar, and Faiz Ahmad Faiz; and analyses of literary problems and movements in Urdu. He has also published a number of essays on Islam.

Qureshi has translated a number of poems by Sahir, Faiz, and Rashid into English. Some of these translations have appeared in American journals such as Literature East West (New York) and Poetry Journal (Chicago). He has also translated into Urdu some public documents for the Canadian government. His essays in English, like many of his Urdu essays, have appeared in the Toronto Newspaper, Crescent. Qureshi's verses (nazms and ghazals) remain largely unpublished. A few have appeared in Toronto newspapers and in the recently published anthology of North American Urdu poets, Baz Gasht which he edited himself. His verses reflect naturalistic and romantic tendencies, often with artistic strokes.

Before emigrating to Canada, Qureshi was associated with the Department of Linguistics at the University of Chicago where he prepared a reader of Modern Urdu Poetry. This reader still remains unpublished but deserves publication. For a while, Qureshi published an Urdu journal Sahba in Toronto, but he could not continue its publication for financial reasons.

M.H.K. Qureshi has a tremendous determination and courage. He leaves no stone unturned for the promotion of Urdu language and literature in Canada. His literary group in Toronto is firmly established and provides an excellent forum for the Toronto Urdu writers to meet and discuss their works regularly.

Razvi, Athar

Athar Razvi is a poet who deals with highly romantic themes with little substance. He is popular among the Urdu-speaking masses in Toronto but has not yet published his works.

Rizvi, Razia

Mrs Rizvi started writing verses (ghazals and nazms) a few years ago after emigrating to Canada. She has composed about a dozen poems, but has published none. Her poems are plain and simple and lacking depth of thought.

Razzaqi, Shahid Hussain

Although Razzaqi, who came to Canada in 1978, is basically a scholar of Islamic Studies and history, some of his books such as Arabi Adbiyat (Arabic Literature), "Iqbal Ka Falsafai Khudi" (Iqbal's Philosophy of "Self"), "Yadon Ke Chiragh" (Candles of Memories), and his book in English, Discourses of Iqbal) do deal with literature. Altogether he has published more than twenty books on subjects ranging from the history of democracy to criticism on the works of the poet-philosopher, Muhammad Iqbal. He has also published over two hundred essays and hundreds of editorial columns on a variety of subjects. A complete bibliographical account of Razzaqi's publications is beyond the scope of this study. The following, therefore, is a list of only those books which

may be classified as literary writings or those which are marginally related to literature.

Maqalat-i-Hakeem. Institute of Islamic Culture, Lahore, 1969, (A collection of essays in three volumes).

Arabi Adabiyat (Arabic Literature). Institute of Islamic Culture, Lahore, 1973.

Discourses of Iqbal Shaikh Ghulam Ali and Sons, Lahore, 1979 (In English).

"Dana-i-Raz: Iqbal" (Wisdom of Iqbal). In press.

"Iqbal Ka Falsafai Khudi" (Iqbal's Philosophy of "Self"). In press.

"Nigarishat-i-Iqbal" (Writings of Iqbal). In press.

"Nigarishat-i-Jamaluddin Afghani" (Writings of Jamaluddin Afghani). In press.

"Bahadur Yar Jang Ka Roznamcha" (Diary of Bahadur Yar Jang). In press.

"Yadon Ke Chiragh" (Candles of Memories). An autobiography. In press.

Two of Razzaqi's books are being translated into English and Indonesian.

Razzaqi has been the editor of at least seven reputable journals of Urdu literature, history and social studies, including Qaumi Zaban (Karachi), Saqafat (Lahore) and Karavan (Karachi). Undoubtedly, scholars like Razzaqi are an asset to Canada and the world. Before immigrating to Canada Razzaqi worked at the Institute of Islamic Culture in Lahore as a research fellow. He is now retired and wishes to continue his work in Toronto.

Sasaruddin, A.M.

A poet, journalist, educationist, and public worker, Sadruddin immigrated to Canada in the mid-1970s from Kenya (Africa). Early in 1980 he went to England for medical treatment where he died of heart failure. Sadruddin was a native of Pakistan and was known in Kenya as a public worker and journalist. I have examined only one poem by Sadruddin, but on this basis consider him to be an accomplished poet. The remainder of his published and unpublished verses were not available for study. Although Sadruddin's stay in Canada was short, he is remembered in Vancouver (where he spent most of his time) as a man very much devoted to the cause of Urdu language and literature in British Columbia.

Sehgal, Faqeer

Sehgal is a poet who writes ghazals and nazms, strictly adhering to the traditional style and content. His verses are far from flawless in craftsmanship and are limited in scope. Himself a Hindu by religion, he has written some devotional poems eulogizing the personality and the message of the Prophet Muhammad. As such, his religious poetry appeals to an audience not because of any inherent poetical merits, but almost entirely because of the commonly shared beliefs of the believers of Islamic faith. Sehgal has not published his poems although he has been writing since 1935.

Sial, Rasheda

Mrs. Sial writes both nazms and ghazals. Her nazms give indications of smouldering resentment against the confining limitations placed on women in traditional Pakistani society. While resenting this, Mrs. Sial does not openly rebel against it. Therein, presumably, lies the source of inner conflict and personal pathos which finds expression in her poems. Her ghazals have soft, understated expressions of personal pathos in a traditional romantic background. Although she has not published her poems, her work shows considerable promise which may find fuller expression, if she has access to an intellectually stimulating environment.

Siddiqui, Syeda Nuzhat

Nuzhat Siddiqui is a relatively young poetess with a great deal of promise (born 1944). She has a perceptive mind and possesses intense power of expression. Her use of language is simple and charming and she has the capability to create pleasing poetic images. Nuzhat writes both nazms and ghazals, but her nazms which are blank verses have more artistic qualities than her ghazals.

I have seen only a few of her compositions, and it appears to me that she usually attempts to capture human feelings such as loneliness and emotional crises. Her verses are not entirely personal, however, and her treatment of themes has a certain element of universality. She feels committed to her

craft and takes writing seriously; she is certainly one of the best poets interviewed during the course of this survey.

Nuzhat started her career as a poetess in the early 1960s and published her verses in college magazines. Beginning in 1970, she consistently published her verses in the prestige Urdu journal Funoon of Lahore and the daily Imroz of Lahore for eight years. In 1979 she immigrated to Canada with her husband and children. Since the 1960s she has composed over one hundred nazms and ghazals and is now planning to publish her first collection of verses. She is a poetess of great promise and deserves attention.

Shaheen, i.e., Wali Alam Shaheen (until about 1979 Shaheed Ghazipuri)

Shaheen is undoubtedly the most accomplished Urdu poet of North America and has a special place among the outstanding contemporary Urdu poets of Pakistan and India. Shaheen successfully uses both nazm and ghazal genres as a medium of expression and analysis. His themes generally include realities of life, his own environment, man's significance in the cosmos, and the defeat of some cherished human values. His poems are characterised by captivating compositions, freshness of thought, and depth of observation and analysis. He has avoided useless experiments and has contributed positively to the tradition of modern Urdu poetry.

Shaheen has been writing since 1954. A collection of over one hundred of his poems appeared in the book entitled Rag-e-Saaz in 1967 which is now out of print. The poems in this book are arranged in chronological order which provides the opportunity to understand the evolution of his thoughts and development of his poetic skills. Shaheen's earlier verses are essentially concerned with romantic experiences and expressions. But even these earlier poems suggest that he is a poet of the twentieth century who cannot easily compromise with the contradictions of his environment.

Shaheen's poems published in the late 1960s and 1970s are reflections of a poet concerned about the rapidly changing society and loss of human values and general decadence that it engenders. His life and his poetry reflect his personal struggle and the struggle of mankind. It is this struggle that provides the intensity of feelings, depth of thought and artistic charm to his

verses.

Shaheen's verses composed in Canada reflect the impact of a variety of factors that a sensitive individual faces in an alien environment. Without losing his individuality, Shaheen consciously and subconsciously depicts this impact in his poetry. Thus he chooses to analyse psycho-social themes such as loneliness and isolation, and themes depicting the various manifestations of the survival of third-world immigrants in the cold, harsh, but beautiful and affluent environment. Some of his poems very skilfully treat the element of hope which at times turns into something like "Waiting for Godot."

Shaheen's poetry has been reviewed by some of the best known critics in Urdu literature such as Ehtesham Hussain, Andaleeb Shadani, Nazeer Siddiqui, Waheed Akhtar, Quamar Raees, Rashid Amjad, Haneef Fauq, and Ahmad Nadeem Qasimi. Since he started writing in the 1950s at least forty reviews of his poetry have appeared in well known Urdu journals in Pakistan and India. His two new collections of poems Benishan and Aangan main Baisakh na Sawan are to be published in the near future. Since the publication of his book, Rag-e-Saaz, Shaheen has composed a large number of poems (both nazms and ghazals) which have been published in almost all the well known journals of India and Pakistan. Compilation of a bibliography of these published poems is too great a task for the present undertaking. In the following, therefore, I am providing only a list of journals in which Shaheen's verses have been published. The year of publication and volume numbers are provided wherever possible. The list of publications is not complete.

Funoon, January-Jadeed Ghazal Number (1969); January/February and April/May (1974); July/August and November/December (1975)
Afkar, September (1971); September and October (1973); January, February, April, August and October (1974); April and July (1975); February, April, November and December (1976); April and July (1977); January, March, August and December (1979); February, April and September (1980)
Seep, vols. 34 and 35
Qand, vol. 2, no. 10
Ahang, November/December (1974)

Naya Daur, vols. 7, 9, 10, 11

1969 Ki Behtrin Shaairy, ed. Hafeez Siddiqui (Siddiqui Publications, Lahore)

Muntakhab Ghazlain (1976), ed. Shahid Shaidai and Salman Butt (Maktaba Tajwar, Lahore)

Baz Gasht: An Anthology of North American Urdu Poets, ed. M. H. K. Qureshi (Toronto, ON: Crescent Pak. Inc.)

Shaheen's poems have also appeared in the various issues of more than thirty other journals in India and Pakistan. The list of these journals includes such reputable names as Auraq, Adabi Duniya, Naya Daur, Aaj Kal, Shabkhoon, Kitab, Anjuman, Mah-i-Nau, Shahrah, Sha'ir, Shahkar and Tahreek.

The English translations of some of Shaheen's poems appeared in Green Snow: An anthology of Canadian poets of Asian Origin, edited by Stephen Gill; also in Urdu Canada 1 (1986), 69-70. A study of Shaheen has been edited by Nuzrat Yar Khan, Dreams and destinations; Shaheen and his poetry (Orleans, ON: Canadian Pakistan Association, 1986). Shaheen has also written reviews of over three dozen books and a few articles which were published in Funoon and other journals on such diverse subjects as "Industrialized Society and Modern Literature," and an introduction to the Spanish poet Lorca.

Shaheen, Aqeela

Aqeela Shaheen writes nazms and ghazals. Her themes are essentially social. She is highly critical of present Pakistani society and its adherence to false, materialistic values. She has recently immigrated to Canada from Pakistan where she taught Urdu literature. Her recently published nazms reflect her resentment towards western values. She appears to take the role of a women's liberationist. Her poems have also (1980) appeared in Baz Gasht.

Presumably, Aqeela Shaheen's verses have appeared in the Urdu journals of Pakistan, but no information was forthcoming from her about this.

Sharma, Roshan Lal

Sharma is a poet popular for his readings in local gatherings. Not yet pub-

lished, his imageries are developed around conventional themes. He portrays himself as a jilted lover, victim of circumstances with a future not very certain, depressed with occasional flames of revenge in his eyes. Coming from the third world, he is aware of the sufferings of the masses in peace and in war. He hopes for the survival of mankind. Roshan Sharma's style has a popular appeal and his message gets through. He has the potential of attaining a higher stature as a poet, but he needs a steady and meaningful devotion to his craft.

Sohail, Mohammad Khalid

Sohail is a medical doctor in St. Johns, Newfoundland. He writes nazms and short stories. Although Dr. Sohail takes writing seriously, his creative talent requires refining before it can attain maturity of thought and expression. He still remains unpublished in the noted Urdu journals. Some of his poems and short stories were published in the Khyber Medical College Magazine in Pakistan.

Ishtiaque (Talib), H.M.

Talib writes ghazals in the traditional style. His verses are ordinary and unstimulating. He occasionally publishes in Toronto newspapers.

Timuri, Neelofar (married name Wazeer Jahan Begum Qazilbash)

Mrs. Qazilbash has written two novels under her pen name Neelofar Timuri, and also writes poems under a different pen name, Hazeen Lucknawi. She has published two novels, Nishat and Phool Muskarai (The Blossoms Smiled), both published in Pakistan by Aeena-i-Adab, Lahore in 1965 and 1969 respectively. Nishat is a social novel of considerable merit and has been acclaimed by some well known Urdu critics of Pakistan such as Viqar Azeem and Mohammad Taqi (the editor of the daily Jang of Karachi). Nishat was introduced to the public by Raees Ahmad Jafffri, a well known Urdu critic of Pakistan. Timuri's second novel, Phool Muskarai, is a romance and is not without merits. She has tremen-

dous flow in her prose and good command of the Urdu language.

After the publication of her second novel she emigrated to Canada with her husband. Her children are also immigrants and are working in various professional fields. Her main motivation to come to Canada appears to be her children. When interviewed in Vancouver (where she now resides with her husband), she expressed intense feelings of nostalgia. Her main concern about living in Canada is the lack of reaction and feedback on her works. She has not written any novel since her immigration to Canada, but she has published occasional articles in the newspaper of the Pakistan-Canada Friendship Soceity of Vancouver.

Recently Mrs. Qazilbash has started writing verses (nazms and ghazals) which reflect her religious feelings and aspirations. Her verses are not always flawless but she appears to convey her message effectively. Her verses are not yet published.

Zia, Abdul Qavi

Zia has experimented with ghazals and Qita's. Usually his verses are technically sound but limited in scope. They have appeared occasionally in Pakistani journals such as Afkar and Shaoor and in Toronto newspapers.

Zia has also writtten a few essays in Urdu and has published the following:

"Lucknow Ke Chand Gumnaam Shoara," Afkar
"Canada men Urdu Ka Ek Jaiza," Afkar
"Urdu Ke Chand Maa'roof Shoa'ra," Urdu
"Ghalib Apne Ahd Ki Tareekh Ki Roshni men," Shaoor

Zia has written two literary articles in English as well: "Iqbal's Poetry: a critical appreciation" in L. Librande and N. Y. Khan, Iqbal: Life, Art and Thought (Ottawa: Canada-Pakistan Association, 1979) and "The last Fifty Years of Urdu Poetry" (in press, Asian Research Council, Hong Kong).

An historian by profession, Zia is dedicated to the promotion of Urdu language and literature in Canada. He is an Associate Professor of History at Laurentian University, Sudbury. His major works in history include "A History

of Islamic Spain" and scores of articles on U.S.-Pakistan relations.

Zuberi, Jalil Uddin

Zuberi's poems reflect a very tentative effort towards writing verses. With time and dedication on his part he may achieve maturity. He writes only ghazals, and has published a few in Toronto newspapers.

Appendices

1. Reference works

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Barker, A.R. Rahman, and H.J. Hamdani. 1968. An Urdu Newspaper Reader. Institute of Islamic Studies. McGill University, Montreal.

Barker, A.R., K.M.S. Dihlavi; and H.J. Hamdani. 1968. A Reader of Modern Urdu Poetry. Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal.

The paperback editions of the above publications are available from Spoken Language Services, Inc; Box: 783, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. U.S.A.

In addition to the above publications, another work on Classical Urdu poetry was initiated by A.R. Barker at the Institute of Islamic studies but was completed and published in the United States in 1977:

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Afkar (Karachi)
Ahang (Gaya/India)
Anjuman (London/England)
Auraq (Lahore) 1960-
Crescent see Fortnightly Crescent
East-West (New York)
Fortnightly Crescent (also Crescent International) (Toronto)
Funoon (Lahore)
Gulrang (Toronto)
Al Hilal (Toronto)
Imroz (Toronto)
Imroz (Lahore)
Jang (Karachi)
Journal of South Asian Literature (University of Chicago)
Jung
Karavan (Karachi)
Kitab (Lucknow)
Kohistan
Mah-yi-Nau (Karachi and Lahore)
Muasir (Lahore) 1979-
Nagoosh (Lahore)
Nairang-e-Khayal
Naya Daur (Columbus, OH)
Paighambar (Toronto)
Pakeeza (Toronto)
Poetry Journal (Chicago)
Qand (Mardan/Pakistan)
Qaumi Zaban (Karachi)

Rooman

Sahba (Toronto)

Saqafat (Lahore) 1975-

Saqi (Delhi)

Savera (Lahore)

Seep (Karachi)

Shabkoon (Allahabad)

Sha'ir (Bombay)

Shahkar (Allahabad)

Shahrah (Delhi)

Shaoor (Hyderabad)

Tahreek (Delhi)

Urdu (Karachi)

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Hassan, Khalid and Faruq Hassan, eds. Nothing but the Truth
Montreal: Dawson College, 1978
also: New Delhi: Vikas, 1983

Gill, Stephen M., ed. Green Snow
Cornwall, ON: Vesta, 1976